

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF MICHIGAN
SOUTHERN DIVISION

JUSTIN GUY, individually and on
behalf of those similarly situated,

Plaintiff,

v.

Case No. 2:20-cv-12734-MAG-EAS
HON. MARK A. GOLDSMITH

ABSOPURE WATER COMPANY, LLC
a domestic limited liability company,

Defendant.

**DEFENDANT'S SECOND MOTION FOR SUMMARY
JUDGMENT BASED ON THE STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS**

Defendant, ABSOPURE WATER COMPANY, LLC, by and through its attorneys, CUMMINGS, MCLOREY, DAVIS & ACHO, PLC, by RONALD G. ACHO and MICHAEL O. CUMMINGS, hereby moves, pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 56(a), for an order dismissing certain Opt-In Plaintiffs from the case and limiting the claims of other Opt-In Plaintiffs based on the statute of limitations set forth in 29 U.S.C. Sections 255(a) and 256 (b). In accordance with L.R. 7.1, the undersigned counsel certifies that counsel communicated in writing with opposing counsel, explaining the nature of the relief sought by way of this motion and seeking concurrence in the relief; opposing counsel thereafter did not concur with the relief requested.

In further support of their motion, Defendants rely on the attached brief and the accompanying attached exhibits.

Dated: September 15, 2023

Respectfully submitted,

s/ Ronald G. Acho

Ronald G. Acho
Cummings, McClorey, Davis & Acho,
P.L.C.
17436 College Parkway
Livonia, MI 48152
(734) 261-2400
racho@cmda-law.com
P-23913

/s/ Michael O. Cummings

Michael O. Cummings
Cummings, McClorey, Davis & Acho,
P.C.
1185 Avenue of the Americas, 3rd Fl.
New York, NY 10036
(212) 547-8810
mcummings@cmda-law.com
N.Y. Bar No. 2701506

Attorneys for Defendant Absopure Water Company, LLC

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EASTERN DISTRICT OF MICHIGAN
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JUSTIN GUY, individually and on
behalf of those similarly situated,

Plaintiff,

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Case No. 20-cv-12734-MAG-EAS
HON. MARK A. GOLDSMITH

ABSOPURE WATER COMPANY, LLC
a domestic limited liability company,

Defendant.

**DEFENDANT'S BRIEF IN SUPPORT OF ITS SECOND MOTION FOR
SUMMARY JUDGMENT BASED ON THE STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents	i
Concise Statement of Issues Presented.....	ii
Controlling or Most Appropriate Authority for the Relief Sought.....	iii
STATEMENT OF MATERIAL FACTS	1
ARGUMENT	10
INTRODUCTION	10
I. PROCEDURAL AND FACUAL BACKGROUND	11
A. Certification and Filing of Consents to Join	11
B. Several Opt-In Plaintiffs Are Asserting Claims Prior to the Limitation Periods.....	12
II. OPT-IN PLAINTIFFS' CLAIMS SHOULD BE LIMITED TO TWO OR THREE YEARS PRIOR TO THE FILING OF THEIR CONSENT FORMS ..	14
A. The Statute of Limitations in FLSA Actions	14
B. Equitable Tolling Should Not Apply	14
CONCLUSION	18

CONCISE STATEMENT OF ISSUES PRESENTED

- I. SHOULD OPT-IN PLAINTIFFS BE LIMITED TO CLAIMS OCCURRING WITHIN THE STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS PERIODS SET FORTH IN 29 U.S.C. §§ 255(A) AND 256(6) BASED ON THE DATE EACH OPT-IN PLAINTIFF FILED A CONSENT TO JOIN THE CASE?

Plaintiffs would say, “No”.

Defendant would say, “Yes”.

**CONTROLLING OR MOST APPROPRIATE
AUTHORITY FOR THE RELIEF SOUGHT**

CASES

Archer v. Sullivan Cty., 129 F.3d 1263, 1997 WL 720406
(6th Cir. 1997)..... 11, 14-16, 18

FEDERAL STATUTES

29 U.S.C. § 255(a) 11, 11, 14, 18

29 U.S.C. § 256(b) 10, 14, 18

STATEMENT OF MATERIAL FACTS

1. Plaintiff Justin Guy was an employee of Defendant Absopure Water Company, LLC (“Absopure”) from September 24, 2018 to February 4, 2020. (Exhibit 1: Defendant’s Statement of Relevant Facts, p. 4).

2. Plaintiff Guy filed his Complaint on October 8, 2020 as an FLSA “collective action”. (Dkt. 1: Collective Action Complaint, PageID.1-20).

3. Defendant filed its answer on March 11, 2021. (Dkt.12: Answer to Complaint, PageID.229-254).

4. Plaintiff Guy moved to conditionally certify the case as an FLSA collective action on March 29, 2022. (Dkt. 58: Motion to Conditionally Certify, PageID.2246-2276).

5. The Court granted conditional certification on February 21, 2023. (Dkt. 77: Order & Opinion, PageID.4534-4543).

6. Thereafter, Plaintiff sent out notices to potential collective employees pursuant to the Court’s order. (Dkt. 82: Order Approving Notice, PageID.4567).

7. The 26 Opt-In Plaintiffs in this case filed notices of their consent in March and April of 2023. (*See* Dkts. 86-1, 90-1, 91-1, 92-1, 94-1, 95-1, 96-1, 97-1, 98-1, 99-1, 100-1 and 101-1 and Statement of Facts (“SOF”) Nos. 9, 12, 15, 18, 21, 24, 27, 30, 33, 36, 39, 42, 45, 48, 51, 54, *infra*).

Several Opt-In Plaintiffs Stopped Working For Absopure Prior to the Two and Three Year Statute of Limitations Period.

8. Opt-In Plaintiff Aaron Armstead was an employee of Absopure from May 14, 2018 to September 21, 2018. (Exhibit 1: Defendant's Statement of Relevant Facts, p. 3).

9. Opt-In Plaintiff Aaron Armstead filed his Consent to Join the Action on March 29, 2023. (Dkt. 95-1, Consent to Join Action, PageID.4630).

10. Over four and a half years (58.5 months) elapsed from the date Opt-In Plaintiff Aaron Armstead began working for Absopure until the time he filed his consent form. (See Exhibit 1, p. 3; Dkt. 95-1, PageID.4630.)

11. Opt-In Plaintiff Dwane Armstead was an employee of Absopure from June 11, 2018 to October 4, 2018. (Exhibit 1: Defendant's Statement of Relevant Facts, p. 3).

12. Opt-In Plaintiff Dwane Armstead filed his Consent to Join the Action on March 30, 2023. (Dkt. 96-1, Consent to Join Action, PageID.4635).

13. Over four and a half years (57 months) elapsed from the date Opt-In Plaintiff Dwane Armstead began working for Absopure until the time he filed his consent form. (See Exhibit 1, p. 3; Dkt. 95-1, PageID.4635.)

14. Opt-In Plaintiff Erick Banks was an employee of Absopure from April 23, 2018 to August 31, 2018. (Exhibit 1: Defendant's Statement of Relevant Facts, p. 3).

15. Opt-In Plaintiff Erick Banks filed his Consent to Join the Action on March 22, 2023. (Dkt. 92-1, Consent to Join Action, PageID.4618).

16. Nearly five years (59 months) elapsed from the date Opt-In Plaintiff Banks began working for Absopure until the time he filed his consent form. (See Exhibit 1, p. 3; Dkt. 92-1, PageID.4618.)

17. Opt-In Plaintiff Ryan Clendennin was an employee of Absopure from July 25, 2017 to July 6, 2018. (Exhibit 1: Defendant's Statement of Relevant Facts, p. 4).

18. Opt-In Plaintiff Ryan Clendennin filed his Consent to Join the Action on April 10, 2023. (Dkt. 99-1, Consent to Join Action, PageID.4645).

19. Over five and a half years (68 months) elapsed from the date Opt-In-Plaintiff Clendennin began working for Absopure until the time he filed his consent form. (See Exhibit 1, p. 4; Dkt. 86-1, PageID.4645.)

20. Opt-In Plaintiff Shawn Jacek was an employee of Absopure from October 15, 2018 to November 27, 2018. (Exhibit 1: Defendant's Statement of Relevant Facts, p. 4).

21. Opt-In Plaintiff Shawn Jacek filed his Consent to Join the Action on March 28, 2023. (Dkt. 94-1, Consent to Join Action, PageID.4625).

22. Almost four and a half years (53 months) elapsed from the date Opt-In-Plaintiff Jacek began working for Absopure until the time he filed his consent form. (See Exhibit 1, p. 4; Dkt. 86-1, PageID.4625.)

23. Opt-In Plaintiff Matthew Jackson was an employee of Absopure from November 19, 2018 to February 8, 2019. (Exhibit 1: Defendant's Statement of Relevant Facts, p. 4).

24. Opt-In Plaintiff Matthew Jackson filed his Consent to Join the Action on March 28, 2023. (Dkt. 94-1, Consent to Join Action, PageID.4626).

25. Almost four and a half years (52 months) elapsed from the date Opt-In-Plaintiff Jackson began working for Absopure until the time he filed his consent form. (See Exhibit 1, p. 4; Dkt. 86-1, PageID.4626.)

26. Opt-In Plaintiff Ricardo Lamar was an employee of Absopure from April 8, 2019 to October 2, 2019. (Exhibit 1: Defendant's Statement of Relevant Facts, p. 4).

27. Opt-In Plaintiff Ricardo Lammer filed his Consent to Join the Action on April 5, 2023. (Dkt. 95-1, Consent to Join Action, PageID.4642).

28. Nearly four years (48 months) elapsed from the date Opt-In-Plaintiff Lammer began working for Absopure until the time he filed his consent form. (See Exhibit 1, p. 4; Dkt. 95-1, PageID.4642.)

29. Opt-In Plaintiff Charles Perry was an employee of Absopure from July 11, 2016 to October 5, 2018. (Exhibit 1: Defendant's Statement of Relevant Facts, p. 4).

30. Opt-In Plaintiff Charles Perry filed his Consent to Join the Action on April 10, 2023. (Dkt. 99-1, Consent to Join Action, PageID.4646).

31. Over six and a half years (80 months) elapsed from the date Opt-In-Plaintiff Perry began working for Absopure until the time he filed his consent form. (See Exhibit 1, p. 4; Dkt. 99-1, PageID.4646.)

32. Opt-In Plaintiff Keith Brown, Jr. was an employee of Absopure from December 4, 2006 to July 1, 2020. (Exhibit 1: Defendant's Statement of Relevant Facts, p. 3).

33. Opt-In Plaintiff Keith Brown, Jr. filed his Consent to Join the Action on April 3, 2023. (Dkt. 97-1, Consent to Join Action, PageID.4638).

34. Over sixteen- and one-half years elapsed from the date Opt-In-Plaintiff Brown began working for Absopure until the time he filed his consent form. (See Exhibit 1, p. 3; Dkt. 97-1, PageID.4638.)

**Several Opt-In Plaintiffs Are Claiming Damages
That Occurred Prior to the Statute of Limitations Period**

35. Opt-In Plaintiff John Aniol was an employee of Absopure from January 10, 2000 to March 29, 2022. (Exhibit 1: Defendant's Statement of Relevant Facts, p. 3).

36. Opt-In Plaintiff John Aniol filed his Consent to Join the Action on March 22, 2023. (Dkt. 92-1, Consent to Join Action, PageID.4617).

37. Over 23 years elapsed from the date Opt-In Plaintiff Aniol began working for Absopure until the time he filed his consent form. (See Exhibit 1, p. 3; Dkt. 92-1, PageID.4617.)

38. Opt-In Plaintiff Danielle Childs is a current employee of Absopure, and he began his employment on December 5, 2019. (Exhibit 1: Defendant's Statement of Relevant Facts, p. 4).

39. Opt-In Plaintiff Danielle Childs filed his Consent to Join the Action on April 5, 2023. (Dkt. 98-1, Consent to Join Action, PageID.4641).

40. Over three years (40 months) elapsed from the date Opt-In-Plaintiff Childs began working for Absopure until the time he filed his consent form. (See Exhibit 1, p. 4; Dkt. 98-1, PageID.4641.)

41. Opt-In Plaintiff Caleb Fish is a current employee of Absopure, and he began his employment on April 30, 2018. (Exhibit 1: Defendant's Statement of Relevant Facts, p. 4).

42. Opt-In Plaintiff Caleb Fish filed his Consent to Join the Action on March 9, 2023. (Dkt. 86-1, Consent to Join Action, PageID.4588).

43. Over four and a half years (58 months) elapsed from the date Opt-In-Plaintiff Fish began working for Absopure until the time he filed his consent form. (See Exhibit 1, p. 4; Dkt. 86-1, PageID.4588.)

44. Opt-In Plaintiff Kevin Phipps was an employee of Absopure from September 11, 2017 to August 16, 2021. (Exhibit 1: Defendant's Statement of Relevant Facts, p. 4).

45. Opt-In Plaintiff Kevin Phipps filed his Consent to Join the Action on April 20, 2023. (Dkt. 101-1, Consent to Join Action, PageID.4650).

46. Over six and a half years (67 months) elapsed from the date Opt-In-Plaintiff Phipps began working for Absopure until the time he filed his consent form. (See Exhibit 1, p. 4; Dkt. 86-1, PageID.4588.)

47. Opt-In Plaintiff Jordan Tampa was an employee of Absopure from August 26, 2019 to January 4. 2022. (Exhibit 1: Defendant's Statement of Relevant Facts, p. 5).

48. Opt-In Plaintiff Jordan Tampa filed his Consent to Join the Action on March 9, 2023. (Dkt. 86-1, Consent to Join Action, PageID.4591).

49. Over three and a half years (42 months) elapsed from the date Opt-In-Plaintiff Tampa began working for Absopure until the time he filed his consent form. (See Exhibit 1, p. 5; Dkt. 86-1, PageID.4591.)

50. Opt-In Plaintiff Kyle Winconeck was an employee of Absopure from January 25, 2021 to March 27, 2022. (Exhibit 1: Defendant's Statement of Relevant Facts, p. 5).

51. Opt-In Plaintiff Kyle Winconeck filed his Consent to Join the Action on March 9, 2023. (Dkt. 86-1, Consent to Join Action, PageID.4592).

52. Over two years (26 months) elapsed from the date Opt-In-Plaintiff Winconeck began working for Absopure until the time he filed his consent form. (See Exhibit 1, p. 5; Dkt. 86-1, PageID.4592.)

53. Opt-In Plaintiff David Sujkowski was an employee of Absopure from February 1, 2021 to March 21, 2022. (Exhibit 1: Defendant's Statement of Relevant Facts, p. 4).

54. Opt-In Plaintiff David Sujkowski filed his Consent to Join the Action on March 20, 2023. (Dkt. 91-1, Consent to Join Action, PageID.4614).

55. Over two years (25 months) elapsed from the date Opt-In Plaintiff Sujkowski began working for Absopure until the time he filed his consent form. (See Exhibit 1, p. 4; Dkt. 91-1, PageID.4614.)

Opt-In Plaintiffs Were Put on Effective Notice of Potential FLSA Violations at the Beginning of Their Employment

56. Each Opt-In Plaintiff was informed about the Defendant's methods of determining pay – commissions or commissions with guaranteed minimums – from the very beginning of employment and that this payment would not include

“overtime” payments when they worked more than 40 hours in a week. (Dkt. No. 119-3, PageID.4909-4911); Exh. 2 Deposition of Justin Guy Tr. pp. 30-31; Exh. 3, Deposition of Keith Brown Tr., pp. 29, 33; Exh. 4, Deposition of Terry Pemberton Tr., pp. 29, 33; Exh. 5, Deposition of David Sujkowski Tr., pp. 24-25).

57. Receiving “time and a half” for overtime is a common practice that is commonly known by 92-97% of all workers. (Exh. 6, U.S. Dept. of Labor, DOLQ129633231, *Worker Classification Knowledge Survey Volume I—Technical Report*, 11/16/2016, pp. 25-27 (showing 92-97% of workers know whether or not they are entitled to overtime) Found at https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/legacy/files/Worker_Classification_Knowledge_Survey_Vol_I_Technical_Report.pdf. (visited Sep. 14, 2023); See also https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/legacy/files/Worker_Classification_Knowledge_Survey_Vol_2_Methods.pdf. (visited Sep. 14, 2023)).

58. The vast majority, 79%-87%, of workers who are not entitled to overtime know the reason why. (*Id.*)

ARGUMENT

INTRODUCTION

The statute of limitations for FLSA cases is two years from commencement of the action or three years if an employer is found to be in willful violation. 29 U.S.C.A. § 255(a). For plaintiffs who opt into a collective action, the action is considered to commence on the date the opt-in plaintiff files a consent to join the action. 29 U.S.C.A. § 256(b). The 26 Opt-In Plaintiffs in this case filed notices of their consent in March and April of 2023. They can thus only claim violations beginning in March/April of 2021 if the two-year limitation period applies or March/April of 2020 should they prove willful violations. Since several of them were no longer working for Defendant during these periods, they should be dismissed from this action altogether. The other Opt-In Plaintiffs should have any claims limited to those after commencement of the period of limitation.

The Opt-In Plaintiffs cannot claim equitable tolling because they were under constructive notice of the potential for FLSA violations from the very first moment of their employment yet did nothing for many years to pursue any claim. As the Sixth Circuit has made clear, “statutes of limitations protect important social interests in certainty, accuracy, and repose and should not be trivialized by ‘promiscuous application of tolling doctrines.’” *Archer v. Sullivan Cty.*, 129 F.3d 1263, 1997 WL 720406, *4 (6th Cir. 1997). The statute of limitations as set forth in

29. U.S.C. §§ 255 (a) and 256(b) thus applies to limit the Opt-In Plaintiffs' claims prior to two or three years before filing their consent forms.

I. PROCEDURAL AND FACTUAL BACKGROUND

A. Certification and Filing of Consents to Join

Plaintiff Guy filed his complaint on October 8, 2020 as an FLSA “collective action”. (Dkt. 1). Defendant filed its answer on March 11, 2021. (Dkt.12). Plaintiff Guy moved to conditionally certify the case as an FLSA collective action on March 29, 2022. (Dkt. 58). The Court granted conditional certification on February 21, 2023. (Dkt. 77). Thereafter, Plaintiff sent out notices to potential collective employees pursuant to the Court’s order. (Dkt. 82). Twenty-Six Opt-In Plaintiffs filed the following consent forms with the Court on the following dates:

Last Name	First Name	Date Consent Filed	Docket No.
Aniol	John	March 22, 2023	92-1
Armstead	Aaron	March 29, 2023	95-1
Armstead	Dwane	March 30, 2023	96-1
Banks	Erick	March 22, 2023	92-1
Belonga	Lucas	March 24, 2023	93-1
Brown	Keith	April 3, 2023	97-1
Childs	Dannielle	April 5, 2023	98-1
Clendennin	Ryan	April 10, 2023	99-1
Fish	Caleb	March 9. 2023	86-1
Householder	Boaz	March 9. 2023	86-1
Jacek	Shawn	March 28, 2023	94-1
Jackson	Matthew	March 28, 2023	94-1

Johnson	Gary	March 14, 2023	90-1
Lammer	Ricardo	April 5, 2023	98-1
Newkirk	Antony	March 29, 2023	95-1
Okimoto	Paul	April 14, 2023	100-1
Pemberton	Terry	March 28, 2023	94-1
Perry	Charles	April 10, 2023	99-1
Phipps	Kevin	April 20, 2023	101-1
Redmer	Nathan	March 9. 2023	86-1
Rhodes	Ryan	March 14, 2023	90-1
Skonieczny	Jesse	March 22, 2023	92-1
Sujkowski	David	March 20, 2023	91-1
Tampa	Jordan	March 9. 2023	86-1
Winconeck	Kyle	March 9. 2023	86-1
Woldt	George	March 29, 2023	95-1

B. Several Opt-In Plaintiffs Are Asserting Claims Prior to the Limitation Periods

1. Opt-In Plaintiffs Who Were Terminated Prior to the Limitations Periods

The following is a list of Opt-In Plaintiffs who left Defendant's employ more than two or three years prior to filing their consent forms:

Name	Termination Date	Three-Year SOL Date
Aaron Armstead	September 21, 2018	March 29, 2020
Dwane Armstead	October 4, 2018	March 30, 2020
Eric Banks	August 31, 2018	March 22, 2020
Ryan Clendennin	July 6, 2018	April 10, 2020
Shawn Jacek	November 27, 2018	March 28, 2020
Matthew Jackson	February 8, 2019	March 28, 2020
Ricardo Lammer	October 3, 2019	April 5, 2020

Charles Perry	October 5, 2018	April 10, 2020
Name	Termination Date	Two-Year SOL Date
Keith Brown	July 1, 2020	April 3, 2021

(Exhibit 1, Defendant's Statements of Relevant Facts, pp. 3-4; Dkts, 92-1, 94-1, 95-1, 96-1, 97-1, 98-1, and 99-1).

2. Opt-In Plaintiffs Who Began Working Prior to the Limitations Periods and Continued Into Those Periods

The following employees, who continued their employment after the limitation periods, began their employment prior to the two- and three-year limitation periods and are asserting claims from those prior periods:

Name	Start Date	Three-Year SOL Date
John Aniol	January 10, 2000	March 22, 2020
Keith Brown	December 4, 2006	March 30, 2020
Caleb Fish	April 30, 2018	March 9. 2020
Kevin Phipps	September 11, 2017	April 20, 2020
Jordan Tampa	August 26, 2019	March 9. 2020
		Two-Year SOL Date
David Sujkowski	February 1, 2021	March 20, 2021
Kyle Winconeck	January 25, 2021	March 9. 2021

(Exh. 1, pp. 3-5; ; Dkts, 86-1, 91-1, 92-1, 95-1, and 101-1).

II. OPT-IN PLAINTIFFS' CLAIMS SHOULD BE LIMITED TO TWO OR THREE YEARS PRIOR TO THE FILING OF THEIR CONSENT FORMS

Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 56(a), provides that “[t]he court shall grant summary judgment if the movant shows that there is no genuine dispute as to any material fact and the movant is entitled to judgment as a matter of law.”

A. The Statute of Limitations in FLSA Actions

“An action to recover unpaid overtime compensation must be ‘commenced within two years after the cause of action accrued, except that a cause of action arising out of a willful violation may be commenced within three years after the cause of action accrued.’” *Archer v. Sullivan Cty.*, 129 F.3d 1263, 1997 WL 720406, *2 (6th Cir. 1997) (citing 29 U.S.C. § 255(a)). “An action is ‘commenced,’ under the FLSA, on the date the complaint is filed, subject to certain exceptions. 29 U.S.C. § 256.” *Id.* “In the case of a collective action such as this one, if the individual claimants do not immediately file written consents to become parties plaintiff the action is considered to be commenced when the written consents are filed.” *Id.* (citing 29 U.S.C. § 256(b)).

B. Equitable Tolling Should Not Apply

“The doctrine [of equitable tolling] permits a plaintiff to avoid the bar of the statute of limitations if ‘despite all due diligence he is unable to obtain vital information bearing on the existence of his claim.’ *Archer v. Sullivan Cty.*, *supra*,

1997 WL 720406, *3 (quoting *Cada v. Baxter Healthcare Corp.*, 920 F.2d 446, 451 (7th Cir.1990), *cert. denied*, 501 U.S. 1261 (1991)). The party seeking equitable tolling bears the burden of proving he is entitled to it. *See Allen v. Yukins*, 366 F.3d 396, 401 (6th Cir. 2004).

“The factors to be considered in this connection include the following: (1) whether the plaintiffs lacked actual notice of their rights and obligations; (2) whether they lacked constructive notice; (3) the diligence with which they pursued their rights; (4) whether the defendant would be prejudiced if the statute were tolled; and (5) the reasonableness of the plaintiffs’ remaining ignorant of their rights. *Archer, supra*, at *3 (citing *EEOC v. Kentucky State Police Dep’t*, 80 F.3d 1086, 1094 (6th Cir.), *cert. denied*, 117 S. Ct 385 (1996)). These factors are not comprehensive, nor must all factors be met in each case. *Allen, supra*, 366 F.3d at 401. Typically, “equitable tolling applies only when a litigant’s failure to meet a legally-mandated deadline unavoidably arose from circumstances beyond that litigant’s control.” *Graham-Humphreys v. Memphis Brooks Museum of Art, Inc.*, 209 F.3d 552, 561-62 (6th Cir.2000) (citing *Baldwin County Welcome Center v. Brown*, 466 U.S. 147, 151, 104 S.Ct. 1723, 80 L.Ed.2d 196 (1984)).

When plaintiffs “have lacked actual notice of [a] violation of the Act and of the filing deadline, it is ‘well-settled that ignorance of the law alone is not sufficient to warrant equitable tolling.’” *Archer, supra*, at *4 (citing *Rose v. Dole*, 945 F.2d

1331, 1335 (6th Cir.1991)). “The statute itself gave the plaintiffs constructive notice of the fact that the county was violating their rights under the FLSA and of the deadline for filing suit.” *Id.*

“the entire purpose of statutes of limitations is to provide finitude to liability for wrongs.” We are also mindful of Judge Posner’s admonition in *Cada* that statutes of limitations “protect important social interests in certainty, accuracy, and repose” and should not be trivialized by “promiscuous application of tolling doctrines.” 920 F.2d at 453.

Id. at *5 (citations omitted)

These factors clearly disfavor any equitable tolling of the statute of limitations.

As the *Archer* court noted “the statue itself” gives plaintiffs notice about any potential violation. *Id.* at *4. Further, it is undisputed that each Opt-In Plaintiff was informed about the Defendant’s methods of determining pay – commissions or commissions with guaranteed minimums – from the very beginning of employment and that this payment would not include “overtime” payments when they worked more than 40 hours in a week. (Dkt. No. 119-3, PageID.4909-4911); Exh. 2 Deposition of Justin Guy Tr. pp. 30-31; Exh. 3, Deposition of Keith Brown Tr., pp. 29, 33; Exh. 4, Deposition of Terry Pemberton Tr., pp. 29, 33; Exh. 5, Deposition of David Sujkowski Tr., pp. 24-25). Receiving “time and a half” for overtime is a common practice that is known by nearly all workers. (Exh. 6, U.S. Dept. of Labor, DOLQ129633231, *Worker Classification Knowledge Survey Volume I—Technical*

Report, 11/16/2016, pp. 25-27 (showing 92-97% of workers know whether or not they are entitled to overtime))¹. Further, the vast majority of workers who are not entitled to overtime know the reason why. *Id.* Thus, Plaintiffs would have been immediately put on effective notice of any potential violation of the FLSA. See *Sandoz v. Cingular Wireless, L.L.C*, 700 Fed.Appx. 317, 321 (5th Cir. 2017) (“The timesheets and paycheck memos that were available to all Cingular employees provided the information necessary to trigger a duty to inquire as to whether the Opt-In Plaintiffs’ hourly wages fell below the minimum wage required by the FLSA.”).

In spite of this knowledge, the Opt-In Plaintiffs did nothing to pursue any potential claim for years, in many cases for five or six and even twenty-three years. Below is a chart showing the length of time from beginning employment at Defendant to filing of the consent form for each Opt-In Plaintiff subject to this Motion:

Name	Time From Employment to Filing Consent
Aaron Armstead	58.5 months, ~ 4 ½ years
Dwane Armstead	57 months, ~ 4 ½ years
Eric Banks	59 months, ~ 5 years
Ryan Clendennin	68 months, ~ 5 ½ years
Shawn Jacek	53 months, ~ 4 ½ years

¹ Found at

https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/legacy/files/Worker_Classification_Knowledge_Survey_Vol_1_Technical_Report.pdf. See also https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/legacy/files/Worker_Classification_Knowledge_Survey_Vol_2_Methods.pdf

Matthew Jackson	52 months, ~4 ½ years
Ricardo Lammer	48 months, ~4 years
Charles Perry	80 months, ~6 ½ years
Keith Brown	184 months, ~16 ½ years
John Aniol	278 months, ~23 years
Daniel Childs	40 months ~3 ½ years
Caleb Fish	58 months, ~4 ½ years
Kevin Phipps	67 months, ~6 ½ years
Jordan Tampa	42 months, 3 ½ years
David Sujkowski	25 months, ~2 years
Kyle Winconeck	25 months, ~2 years

(Exh. 1, pp. 3-5: Dkts, 86-1, 91-1; 92-1, 94-1, 95-1, 96-1, 97-1, 98-1, 99-1, and 101-1).

These Opt-In Plaintiffs cannot show diligence. *Archer*, at * 3.

Equitable estoppel is thus not warranted in this case and the statute of limitations should apply to dismiss the Opt-In Plaintiffs' claims for alleged violations occurring prior to two or three years before the filing of their consent forms. *See* 29 U.S.C. §§ 255(a) and § 256(b).

CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, Defendant Absopure Water Company, LLC respectfully requests this Honorable Court to apply the statute of limitations pursuant to 29 U.S.C. §§ 255(a) and 256(b) and dismiss Opt-In Plaintiffs' claims for alleged violations occurring prior to two or three years before the filing of their consent forms.

Dated: September 15, 2023

Respectfully submitted,

s/ Ronald G. Acho

Ronald G. Acho
Cummings, McClorey, Davis & Acho,
P.L.C.
17436 College Parkway
Livonia, MI 48152
(734) 261-2400
racho@cmda-law.com
P-23913

/s/ Michael O. Cummings

Michael O. Cummings
Cummings, McClorey, Davis & Acho,
P.C.
1185 Avenue of the Americas, 3rd Fl.
New York, NY 10036
(212) 547-8810
mcummings@cmda-law.com
N.Y. Bar No. 2701506

Attorneys for Defendant Absopure Water Company, LLC

CERTIFICATE OF CONCURRENCE

Defendant certifies that, in accordance with L.R. 7.1, its counsel conferred in writing with Plaintiffs' counsel on September 7, 2023, explained the nature of the motion, and requested counsel to concur in the relief sought in this motion, and that Plaintiffs' counsel declined to concur.

LOCAL RULE CERTIFICATION

I, Michael O. Cummings, certify that this document complies with Local Rule 5.1(a), including: double-spaced (except for quoted materials and footnotes); at least one- inch margins on the top, sides, and bottom; consecutive page numbering; and type size of all text and footnotes that is no smaller than 10-1/2 characters per inch (for non-proportional fonts) or 14 point (for proportional fonts). I also certify that it is the appropriate length. Local Rule 7.1(d)(3).

Dated: September 15, 2023

/s/ Michael O. Cummings

Michael O. Cummings
Cummings, McClorey, Davis & Acho, P.C.
Attorneys for Defendants
1185 Avenue of The Americas, Third Floor
New York, NY 10036
(212) 547-8810
mcummings@cmda-law.com
N.Y. Bar No. 2701506

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on September 15, 2032 I electronically filed the foregoing paper with the Clerk of the Court using the ECF system, which will send notification to all parties of record. I hereby certify that I have mailed by United States Postal Service the paper to the following non-ECF participants: None.

Dated: September 15, 2023

/s/ Michael O. Cummings
Michael O. Cummings
Cummings, McClorey, Davis & Acho, P.C.
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